



EPA ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF TEST FOR LEAD AND THE START OF A SUPERFUND REMOVAL ACTION AT THE RARITAN BAY SLAG SITE IN RARITAN BAY

Community Update

March 2009

The NJDHSS, in cooperation with ATSDR, has determined that portions of the Raritan Bay Slag site pose a Public Health Hazard and recommend restricted access to the seawall and a beach in Laurence Harbor and a jetty in Sayreville.

QUESTIONS? Please Contact

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Visit EPA's Web site at:

www.epa.gov/region02/superfund

DEFINITIONS:

Removal Action - a short-term action taken under the Superfund Program to address a release or threat of release of a hazardous substance that may present an imminent and substantial danger to the public health or welfare, or the environment.

Slag - a by-product of processing rocks to extract minerals such as lead.

EPA has been evaluating the Raritan Bay Slag site for a Superfund Removal Action. Samples were collected at the site in September 2008 as part of an assessment, which also included the gathering of historical information and available data. The sampling included the collection of soil, sediment, water, biological, and waste samples along the seawall in Laurence Harbor, the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet, and the beaches and park area situated near these two locations.

Analytical results generated by both EPA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) indicate that significantly elevated levels of lead and other heavy metals are present in the soils, beach sand, and sediment, in and around both the seawall in Laurence Harbor and the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet. Lead was also identified on the first beach between the western end of the seawall and the first jetty in Old Bridge Waterfront Park. At this time, EPA is awaiting the results of the biological and waste samples.

EPA requested that the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) evaluate the analytical data generated at the site. ATSDR is the lead federal public health agency responsible for determining human health effects associated with toxic exposures. The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS), in cooperation with ATSDR, evaluated the data and concluded that a Public Health Hazard exists at the seawall in Laurence Harbor, the beach between the western end of the seawall and the first jetty, and the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet (including the waterfront area immediately west of the inlet). Samples collected from the developed portion of the park, including the playground, and the beach located east of the Cheesequake Creek Inlet, were determined to represent No Apparent Public Health Hazard.

Based on the available data, EPA has determined that a Superfund Removal Action is warranted at the Raritan Bay Slag site. Actions to be taken include: restricting access to the areas of known contamination and placement of signs alerting the public to the presence of contaminants. EPA plans to provide timely, concise, and accurate information to the community through updates, meetings and mailings as necessary.

www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/raritanbayslag

HISTORY/BACKGROUND INFO:

The Raritan Bay Slag site is located in the Laurence Harbor section of Old Bridge and in Sayreville along the Raritan Bay. The overall site spans approximately 1.3 miles in length and consists of the waterfront area between Margaret's Creek and the area just beyond the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet. The portion of the site that is in Laurence Harbor is part of what is now called Old Bridge Waterfront Park. Lead slag, reportedly in the form of blast furnace pot bottoms, was deposited along the beachfront in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The other portion of the site that is in Sayreville is located on, and adjacent to, the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet. The slag on the jetty is similar in appearance to that which is present on the seawall. Crushed battery casings are also evident on the jetty. The Raritan Bay Slag site is part of a larger effort which includes the area around Margaret's Creek, an area in which the NJDEP discovered lead-contaminated material.

US EPA Region 2 has designated an Ombudsman as a point-of-contact for community concerns and questions about the federal Superfund program in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. To support this effort, the Agency has established a 24-hour, toll-free number that the public can call to request information, express their concerns or register complaints about Superfund. The ombudsman for EPA's Region 2 office is:

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